

while promoting research initiatives that have the potential to lead to breakthroughs in treatments and advances in care. Muscular Dystrophy Awareness Month provides a special opportunity to bring together advocates and researchers to educate the public and support efforts to better understand this disease while working to improve the quality of life for impacted individuals. Washtenaw County's participation in the Light It Up Green event underscores the community's support for individuals diagnosed with muscular dystrophy, and it is my hope that public officials continue to play a leading role in combating this disease and promoting policies that provide all Americans the opportunity to live healthy lives.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing June as Muscular Dystrophy Awareness Month. We must continue to support efforts to better understand muscular dystrophy so that there will one day be a cure for this devastating disease.

#### OPPOSING TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S ATTACK ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

#### HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 4, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, in less than one week, the Trump Administration has managed to level a double blow to the fight against discrimination faced by minority groups in our country.

Yesterday, the Trump Justice Department, currently headed by Attorney General Jeff Session, announced plans to redirect departmental resources toward investigating and suing universities over their affirmative action admissions policies.

Mr. Speaker, this preemptive attack on higher education affirmative action programs, if fully implemented, will deny educational opportunities to millions of deserving students from underrepresented communities and hamper America's ability to compete and win in an increasingly complex, competitive, multicultural global economy.

Not only does the announcement by the Justice Department threatens to undo decades of progress in trying to ensure that every child in America—regardless of race or ethnicity—has an equal opportunity to succeed, but it is directly contrary to long line of judicial precedent upholding the use of race-conscious affirmative action programs that are narrowly drawn and administered to achieve diversity in higher education.

It was only a year ago that the Supreme Court, in *Fisher v. University of Texas*, No. 14–981, 579 U.S. \_\_\_\_ (2016), affirmed that the admissions policy of the University of Texas at Austin complied with the principles established in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 306 (2003), which held that “obtaining the educational benefits of student body diversity is a compelling state interest that can justify the use of race in university admissions.”

Mr. Speaker, as the Member of Congress for the Eighteenth Congressional District of Texas, I am proud to be a representative from a state that has played a pivotal role in the nation's educational equity jurisprudence, begin-

ning with the landmark case of *Sweatt v. Painter*, 339 U.S. 629 (1950), won by Thurgood Marshall and which held that segregated law schools violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and laid the foundation for the landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954), which prohibited racial segregation in all schools.

Affirmative action is needed to ensure diversity on college campuses which will yield diversity in the ranks of America's future leaders.

In a globalized and increasingly interconnected world, the nation that succeeds is the one best positioned to adapt to a world of differences—cultural, religious, economic, social, racial, and political.

The key to success in a diverse global economy is learning to adapt and thrive in diverse communities where the next generation and its leaders are educated and trained.

That is why it is truly appalling that the Sessions-led Department of Justice is seeking to undermine the principles established in *Grutter v. Bollinger*: that diversity in higher education is such a compelling governmental interest that race-conscious admission policies are permissible if other alternatives are found to be inadequate.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen before the effects of university admissions policies that do not address racial disparities in access to higher education.

From 1997 to 2004, affirmative action in admissions at the University of Texas was barred by the infamous Fifth Circuit decision in *Hopwood v. Texas*, 78 F.3d 932 (5th Cir. 1996).

As a result of the University of Texas's inability to consider a qualified applicant's race in the admissions process, between 1997 and 2004 African-American students never comprised more than 4.5 percent the entering class—far below the 13 percent of Texas high school graduates who are African Americans.

Worse yet, for the students attending the University of Texas during that period, 4 out of every 5 of classes (79 percent) at the University had zero, or only one, African-American student.

It should go without saying that these are not statistics we would like to see repeated, nor is this any way to produce a generation of American leaders for the 21st century.

Affirmative action works; it is the right thing to do for our country.

Fostering educational diversity and greater opportunity is critical to our nation's future in a global economy and an increasingly interconnected world.

That is why diversity is supported by a broad cross-section of American society, including military leaders, major corporations, small business owners, educators, and students from all backgrounds.

An America that celebrates diversity in higher education will produce the leaders, inventors, entrepreneurs, diplomats, public servants, and teachers that will serve our nation well in the global economy of the 21st century.

We must stand loudly and unequivocally against any effort made by this Administration to subvert the progress we have made in guaranteeing every American student, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion or other immutable characteristics, access to higher education and in positioning our country to com-

pete and win in the global economy of the 21st century.

#### HONORING ELISA MARCUS AND DROR BIKEI

#### HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 4, 2017

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is vitally important that we recognize those who strengthen our communities through their involvement. For the Conservative Synagogue Adath Israel in Riverdale, two of those individuals are Elisa Marcus and Dror Bikel, who are being honored this year with CSAIR's Kehillah Award at their annual Spring Gala.

Elisa grew up in Dayton, Ohio, where participating in shul life was a given and Shabbat meant going to synagogue and being with family and friends. Dror took a different path to Jewish involvement. Born in Berkeley, California to Israeli parents, then living in Brookline, Massachusetts, Dror was not particularly involved in formal Jewish life. While he was studying at Brandeis University, his interest in Israel and Jewish life awakened. Both Elisa and Dror spent formative years studying in Israel. They later found themselves and each other on the Upper West Side, where their friendships and involvement in the community of young Jews brought them together.

Fast forward to Riverdale and CSAIR. Through Mason Voit, CSAIR Director of Education and Family Life, Elisa was drawn to serve the shul. For three years she led the Young Children's Family Program and joined the Board of Trustees. She played an important role in a three-year review of the synagogue's mission statement and currently serves as the Vice President for Education.

Dror's passion for Krav Maga first led him to teaching evening classes in the synagogue, then to answering a call by CSAIR president Abby Pitkowsky and Rabbi Katz to lead CSAIR's security program. His work led to the hiring of a security consultant to help with the acquisition and implementation of \$100,000 in grants to improve the building's access control, physical structure, and communication system.

The character of the community is something Dror and Elisa care deeply about. Their children, Ariel, 9, and Liat, 7 love being in the building, attending services, and have developed great friendships. From the beginning of their involvement, Elisa and Dror have been struck by the degree to which people care about CSAIR and want to be involved, and it shows through their dedication and service. Congratulations to them both on receiving this great honor.

#### HONORING DR. ROBERT (BOB) SHILLMAN

#### HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 4, 2017

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Dr. Robert (Bob) Shillman. I have been a friend of Dr. Bob's for many years. I

have nothing but admiration and respect for his success story and his efforts to promote America's free-enterprise system.

Dr. Bob received his undergraduate degree from Northeastern University, and his master's degree and Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from MIT. He founded Cognex in 1981, which is the world's leading provider of machine vision sensors and systems. The company grew out some work he did as a fellow with the National Science Foundation in the late 1970s, which concerned programming computers to recognize handwriting.

Dr. Bob has a passion for philanthropy. He contributes to organizations that he believes are working to make the world a better place. He also promotes the advancement of education to ensure that there are generations of engineers and entrepreneurs.

He no longer takes a salary for his work at Cognex, and at his request, each year the company donates that amount, along with any bonus that he may have the right to receive, to a public charity. He tells everyone that his Ph.D. no longer stands for Doctor of Philosophy, but for Doctor of Philanthropy.

Dr. Bob is a strong supporter of the fight for freedom and democracy around the world, and of Israel, our closest ally in the Middle East. He also shares our commitment to keeping America safe and strong.

I am proud to recognize all the contributions he has made to defend the Constitution and the freedoms it provides. As Dr. Bob has reminded us, he is one who has benefitted from these freedoms, and he would like to see that future generations of Americans have the same opportunities that have been afforded him.

I thank Dr. Bob for his generosity, commitment and patriotism.

#### HONORING THE MERIDEN PUERTO RICAN FESTIVAL

**HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 4, 2017*

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Meriden Puerto Rican Festival in Meriden, Connecticut. This cultural festival is a highlight of summer in Connecticut, and it brings us together to learn about and enjoy the food, music, dance, and history of the Puerto Rican community.

Each year, the Puerto Rican Festival attracts thousands of people to Meriden from across New England and the Northeast. Visitors can enjoy delicious Puerto Rican food from an array of vendors and enjoy performances from musicians and dancers.

The first festival was planned by Francisco Velez, who was born in Puerto Rico and came to Meriden in 1947. Inspired by the Puerto Rican cultural events in New York, Francisco wanted to share his culture and heritage with his community in Connecticut. Following the first festival in 1967, Francisco led it for more than four decades, and his vision has evolved into a signature event that brings together Meriden residents and thousands of visitors to celebrate Puerto Rican culture and the Puerto Rican community's contributions to the city and state. I also want to recognize the many

volunteers who have generously given their time and skills to make this festival such a success over the past 50 years.

Mr. Speaker, the Puerto Rican Festival has brought our community together to celebrate the culture of Puerto Rico and the Puerto Rican community in our state. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor the festival, and all those who have contributed to its success for the past five decades, here today.

#### COMMEMORATING 52ND ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 4, 2017*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleagues in recognizing and commemorating the 52nd Anniversary of Medicaid and Medicare.

As Medicare and Medicaid turn 52 this week, I stand with the nation to declare my unequivocal commitment to two of the most impactful government programs ever launched.

On July 30, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Medicare and Medicaid into law as part of the Social Security Act.

This landmark legislation that truly represents Americans at our best became a reality due to the tireless efforts of great leaders like Teddy Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and Lyndon B. Johnson.

The signing of the law that established Medicare forged a promise with American seniors.

A promise that assured those who have contributed a lifetime to our nation could enjoy their golden years with peace of mind and the security of reliable, affordable, and high quality healthcare.

Likewise, Medicaid created a crucial partnership between the Government and the Governed to provide a basic health care safety net for some of the most vulnerable Americans: children of adults with low incomes, persons with disabilities and the poor.

Mr. Speaker, 52 years later, the legacy of these programs has proven how powerful government action can be to the life and well-being of our nation's most vulnerable.

In 1965, almost half of those 65 and older had no health coverage, living in fear that the colossal healthcare costs would drive them and their families into poverty.

Today, because of that monumental legislation, over 98 percent of seniors have health insurance, which has led to a five-year increase in life expectancy for those over 65.

Today, 55 million Americans rely on Medicare for health care, ranging from preventive services, hospital visits, lab tests, to critical medical supplies, and prescription drugs.

It is difficult for some to image what 1965 was really like, when today affordable, accessible and available health insurance is a reality for so many people living with disabilities.

Before Medicaid poor families with children, pregnant women, and low-income working Americans were not able to afford even the most basic medical care they needed to remain healthy and productive.

When the legislation was first passed, many claimed that Medicaid would never prosper,

yet today because of expansion of Medicaid through passage of the Affordable Care Act the program provides comprehensive coverage for over 73 million children, pregnant women, low-income adults, and people living with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, it is indisputable that both programs, Medicare and Medicaid, have been monumental victories and the proudest accomplishments of the Democratic Party and our great Nation.

In my home state of Texas and in communities across the country, both programs have significantly changed the lives and improved health outcomes of many Americans over the past century and represent the best American values where we believe Health is a Human right not a commodity.

This is bittersweet for the residents of the state of Texas anniversary because celebrate these programs that have saved lives, helped people live longer, expanded care to marginalized communities, closed healthcare access gaps, and provided the peace of mind that comes with affordable and equitable health care.

Unfortunately, Texas has the highest percentage of uninsured (17.7) in the nation.

The State of Texas' refusal to participate in the Medicaid expansion created by the Affordable Care act puts the poor residents my state in jeopardy.

In the 18th Congressional District there are 195,400 persons with Medicaid and 74,704 with medical care provided by Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents in the 18th Congressional District of Texas favor the Affordable Care Act because they understand the insecurity and feeling of helplessness of being uninsured or underinsured.

Like those great achievements, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, or ObamaCare, was vehemently opposed and derided by its adversaries, who said it was too costly, would not work, was unnecessary, or would change the character of America for the worse.

Like the critics of Social Security, Medicare, and the G.I. Bill, all of whom are silent now, they are wrong.

The Affordable Care Act has been an unqualified success.

This historic legislation has extended affordable health coverage to tens of millions of Americans, and has helped to bring and peace of mind to many of those for whom relief seemed far out of reach.

The Affordable Care Act was driven by a simple premise: that citizens of the most prosperous nation on earth should not be forced to choose between their health and their financial security.

Since the passage of the ACA in 2010, the number of uninsured Americans has fallen by more than one-third, or roughly 20 million people.

These Americans come from all walks of life.

They are women, who can no longer be denied coverage or be forced to pay exorbitant amounts for coverage simply because of their sex.

They are nine million seniors and people with disabilities, who have saved \$1,600 each on expensive and lifesaving prescription medication.

And they are this country's most at risk citizens; people who are working hard and struggling make ends meet while living in near-poverty, and who have been covered by Medicaid